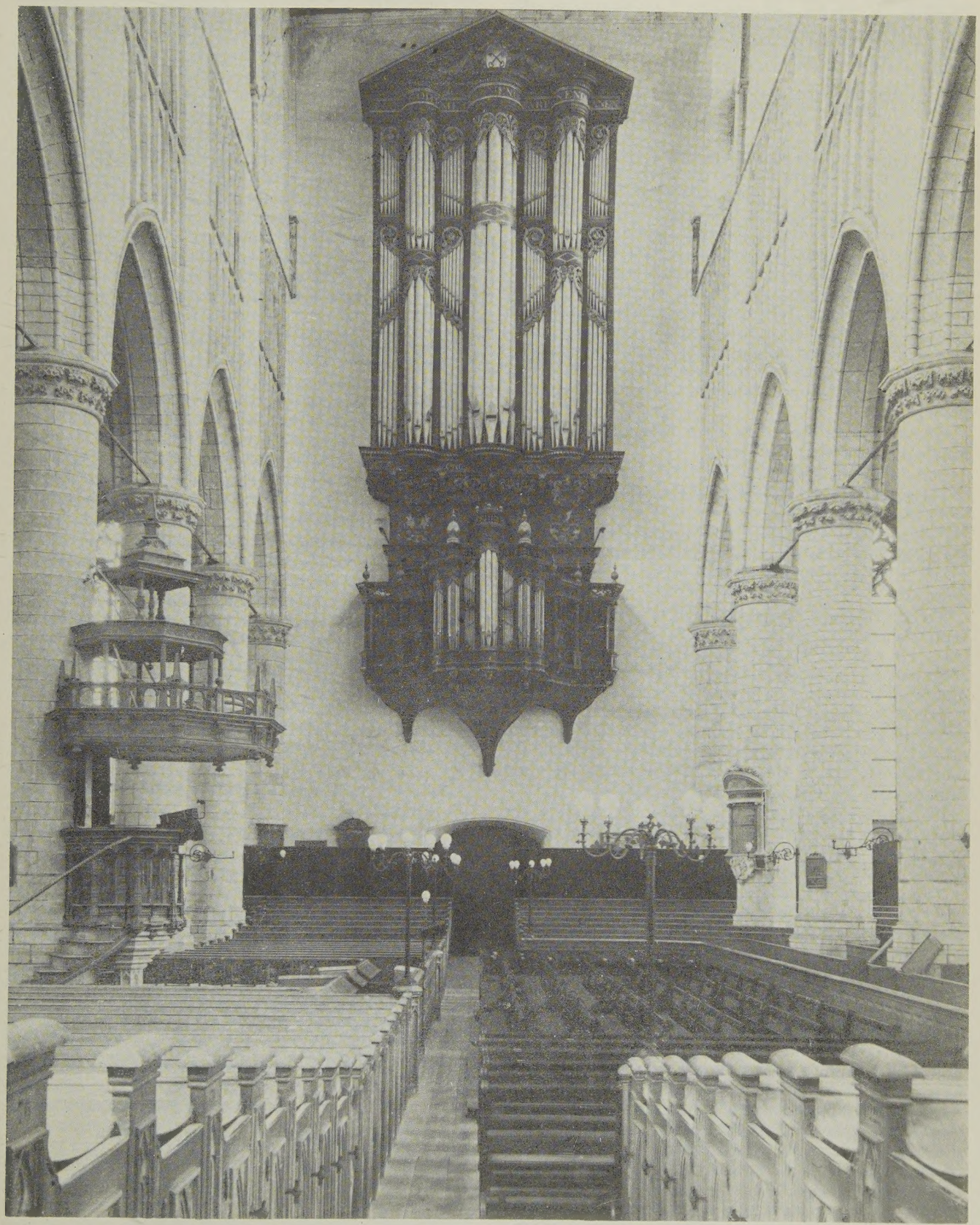
The Congregationalist



May, 1958

THE REAL QUESTION

(A Letter Sent to Iowa Congregationalists by the Laymen Whose Names are Signed)

Dear Fellow-Congregational Christian:

In sending this to you, we are doing so in the belief that you are a fair-minded person, who does not make important decisions without first getting all the facts which may prove of help to you in reaching your decision.

With this brief preface, we like to ask this question:

DO YOU WISH TO LEAVE CONGREGATIONALISM?

If your answer is an unqualified "Yes" then there probably is no reason for you to read further, except for information. But, if your answer is "No", or "I'm not sure," or anything but that final "Yes," then we'd like to present a few items for your consideration which may have some bearing upon the merger controversy.

Let us make it clear that we have no quarrel with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, nor with any other denomination. We fully and vigorously defend the right of any individual to reach his own decision on any matter of custom or religion. For those who honestly and sincerely believe that they can best serve their God by entering the United Church of Christ, we have complete respect.

We only hope that they have considered well the implications of that decision.

For, in taking that step . . .

THEY ARE DEFINITELY LEAVING CONGREGATIONALISM.

In Congregationalism it is an unalterable truth that the local church is completely autonomous — in other words, it is entirely free of any "higher" church government.

No constitutions of ecclesiastical organizations other than the local church can bind it in any action whatsoever. No one can interfere with its right to own property, call its minister, decide its creed and doctrines and order of worship, or any other rights and privileges it holds consistent with civil law. No "standards of practice" can be set for it; and any relations it has with other Congregational Christian churches, or other denominations, are in the spirit of fellowship, free and unhampered by denominational higher-ups.

In Congregationalism ALL decisions affecting the local church are made ONLY by the members of that church and neither the minister, nor anyone else can dictate those decisions.

The purpose of any constitution obviously is to govern. Any constitution that is to be submitted to local churches for consideration, and which will EVER become an instrument binding on the local church is a complete departure from historic Congregationalism. No matter how lenient such a constitution may be at the beginning, it can be amended; and control can be imposed from OUTSIDE the local congregation. No one can reconcile an overall denominational constitution with historic Congregational principles and practices.

Contrary to some opinions, it is in no way un-Christian to defend one's belief in Congregationalism; rather, it would be most un-Christian to surrender a principle in which one believes. It is shamefully true that many un-Christian things have been done, and many un-Christian words have been uttered on both sides of this question. But a sincere, fair, vigorous defense of principle is surely completely Christian.

Ecumenicity?

A word often heard is "ecumenicity." Well, it should never come up in our considerations. For, if the "ecumenical," "one-church" idea implies organic union, then it always has been contrary to Congregationalism. If, on the other hand, as those who are proud of historic Congregationalism believe, it means co-operation and fellowship on a broad and non-denominational basis, Congregationalism has always been in the forefront of such sharing of work, ideas, ideals, and Christian outreach.

It seems highly improbable to us that a "United Church" can ever accomplish more in this field than our free Congregational churches have accomplished. Our churches led in the founding of institutions of learning in the early years of our country; and our missionary work, both foreign and domestic, is well known to all.

Some may ask you, "By whose, or what, authority do these laymen write?" You may be told, "Those fellows have no official capacity which gives them standing to speak." Our answer is this: We write in no official capacity; we are not ministers; we represent no denominational hierarchy; we are just individual Congregational laymen. In complete harmony with Congregational traditions we need no "authority," or "official standing" to speak. A clear conscience under God gives us all the authority we need.

We are exercising that cherished doctrine of the "priesthood of the believer." We are speaking out because we have a deep sense of obligation for the sacrifices made by our forefathers to secure for us the right to worship freely; and with a real concern that we defend that right for future generations.

Please accept our gratitude for reading this message. We have not wanted to give offense, or to interfere with your right to reach your own decision freely; but, we do feel that these are some of the questions to which you will seek answers before you resolve the REAL question:

DO YOU WISH TO LEAVE CONGREGATIONALISM?

Just one more thing. We have been told, from time to time, that Congregationalism is a dying, declining proposition, and that we should get "on the band wagon" of church union. Let us say this: Congregationalism is not a denomination; it is a way of life — a way of living — an ideal that is nurtured in the hearts of free men.

And, as long as truly free men live, men who accept Christ, who acknowledge His teachings, who are unafraid before their Maker, who are willing to fellowship with other free men — then so long will the fellowship of free Congregational Christian churches live and flourish.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

M. W. "Bud" Hughes
Clear Lake, Iowa

C. W. Campbell
Spencer, Iowa

Leon Laird
Algona, Iowa

Mark Ferguson
Charles City, Iowa

Guy R. Swan
Riceville, Iowa

E. W. Adams
Marshalltown, Iowa

OUR NEW EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Some months ago Dr. Harry W. Johnson, Executive Secretary of the National Association since its organization in 1955, requested the Executive Committee to obtain and appoint his successor not later than the end of 1958. Considerations of health require Dr. Johnson to live at the high elevation of Boise, Idaho, a point geographically unsuitable for the central office of the Association.

Upon receiving Dr. Johnson's resignation, the Executive Committee set about the task of finding his successor, and is now happy to announce that Rev. Neil H. Swanson Jr., since 1952 pastor of the First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa, Wis., has accepted the office. He will take over the duties some time after the Annual Meeting in October at First Congregational Church, Detroit.

Mr. Swanson, a native of Minneapolis, is in his 40th year. He is a graduate of Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, Iowa, with Phi Beta Kappa rank, and of Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill. He also studied for one year at Union Theological Seminary. After teaching philosophy at the University of Minnesota and doing part time young people's work in Minneapolis churches, he became Associate to Dr. Henry James Lee at Wauwatosa. After Dr. Lee's tragic death in 1952 the church made him minister.

Mr. Swanson and his wife, Helen, have four children, Dave, 15, Shirley, 13, Kenney, 10, and Howard, 7. After his resignation as pastor of the First Church in Wauwatosa takes effect, the Swansons will continue to live in that city, and the central office of the National Association will be in Milwaukee.

In a letter to the parish announcing Mr. Swanson's resignation, Mr. Wilford D. York, Moderator, stated that the Church Council was deeply shocked and concerned, but recognized that this new undertaking could do much to assure the continuation of not only Congregational churches, but all free churches.

THE COURT OPINION

In the April CONGREGATIONALIST (p. 3) "A Late Bulletin" announced that Judge A. O. Dawson of the Federal Court, Southern District of New York, had denied the motions made by the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the General Council and defendant Congregational boards, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to dismiss the case filed against them last June by the First Congregational Church of Burlington, Iowa, three other churches, and ten individual members and ministers. THE FREE CHURCHES for September 1957 gives a summary of the complaint in this suit.

Not Settled in "Cadman v. Kenyon"

Three motions to dismiss had been made by the attorneys for the defendants. The first, made by the General Council and Boards, claimed that the issue had been settled in the "Cadman Case," of 1949-53, in which the judgment of the trial court favorable to the plaintiff had been dismissed by higher New York courts. One of the reasons set forth by Judge Dawson for denying this motion was that the several Congregational boards and the Evangelical and Reformed Church were not parties to that case, nor was the adjudication in the New York courts binding upon the present plaintiffs. Regarding the further claim of the defendants that the Committee for Continuation of Congregational Christian Churches was actually the plaintiff in both cases, Judge Dawson states, "The facts as to the Continuation Committee are not undisputed and those facts cannot be determined on this motion but should be determined, if properly pleaded, at the trial where the parties will have an opportunity for examination and cross-examination."

The assertion by the Congregational defendants' attorneys that the Court had no jurisdiction because the Continuation Committee had deliberately selected nonresident plaintiffs and persuaded them to bring this suit, is answered by the point that the plaintiff churches and members are real parties in interest with substantial rights involved in the outcome of this litigation.

Suit Based on Present Facts

The Evangelical and Reformed Church sought dismissal of the suit on the grounds that the plaintiffs have known for over eight years of the participation of that body in the proposed merger. The plaintiffs contend that the suit is brought upon facts as they existed in 1957. "Under the circumstances," says the Court, "and under the present posture of the facts, it appears that there is not sufficient merit to this motion of defendant to warrant the granting of dismissal as to it."

In the motion made by the American Board, which claimed that this Board is not "doing business within the Southern District of New York," the Court finds that the close tie-up with the Missions Council, which has its office in New York, makes this claim invalid. This Board had also asserted that, as a Massachusetts corporation, it was not subject to the suit in New York, to which the Court replies, "It appears that the common questions of law and fact as to the interpretation and validity of the 'Basis of Union' and 'Interpretations' may arise which will affect the American Board as well as the other defendants and plaintiffs here."

All Motions Denied

The formal part of the opinion closes with the words, "All motions of the defendants are therefore denied. In making this determination the Court wishes to make it clear that it is not passing upon the principal issues involved in the litigation; all that it is deciding is that those issues cannot be determined on a motion but must await the trial of the action."

A concluding statement by the Court that more Christian charity and understanding would have made it possible to adjust the differences so that the time and money might be devoted to the promotion of Christianity rather than to litigation, will meet with the approval of all Christians. But when the attempt to arrive at an understanding of the rights of dissenting churches, at Omaha in 1956, was turned down by the General Council, those who had rights involved could see no alternative to court action.

Our Devotional Column

Rev. Bruce H. Masselink, Burlington, Iowa

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." (REVELATION 3:8)

Of the many and varied experiences that come to individuals one in particular stands out freshly in my mind. It occurred a number of years ago when I was privileged to give a Commencement address at the State School for the Blind at Vinton, Iowa. The impression one gets as he talks with the students is never to be forgotten, and beyond this several lessons important in one's living are also learned.

The students at this school, joyful and radiant and happy as they may be, do have, I was told, one fear, and that is a half-open door. If the door is closed they are aware of this as they approach it, by their sensitive response to vibrations. They will walk right up to it and stop and open it. If the door is wide open it is startling to see them walk right on through without hesitancy. Again this is accomplished by their fine sensitivity. But when a door is half open they are not sure and oftentimes they met with a mishap due to indecision.

Is there not a vital lesson in this illustration? Oftentimes in life we are faced with decisions that must be settled in a forthright manner of either Yes or No. By vacillating and compromising, regardless of the pressures upon us, we may be doing an injustice to ourselves and harm to the cause in which we believe. We see about us today a great deal of indecision. To those who cannot bring themselves to a clear-cut answer, it is as if they were approaching a half-open door. From time to time there are decisions that must be made by all of us that demand a wide open door. Likewise, there are times when the door must be shut to invasions, pressures, compromises and indecision.

Life brings to all of us the opportunity to take a definite stand for that in which we believe. There are times when a middle-of-the-road policy does not suffice. People are not interested in our doubts but in our affirmations. At moments of decision the half-open door policy could cause mishap. So with all decisions in our personal and church life, as well as community and national life, it is better to take a stand than half-heartedly to support both sides. It has well been said, "It is better to do what you know is right and be thought wrong than to do what you know is wrong just to be thought right."

FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

"Our New Members Don't Care"

Most Protestant churches have experienced a substantial gain in membership since the Second World War. Young adults, settling down in communities where they are new to their surroundings, are usually a large factor in this church membership increase. And in joining the Protestant church of their neighborhood, no deep sense of loyalty to that particular denomination was usually involved. Emphasis upon the principles which distinguish that denomination from all others were usually minimized by the pastor and church leaders who sought out the new members.

Most of our Congregational Christian churches have shared in these experiences. Most of these newer and younger church members have come into our fellowship with little or no understanding of, or concern about, the distinctively Congregational principles. Almost any one of the major denominations could have enlisted these people about as well as Congregationalism.

But they have joined a Congregational church. That church is incorporated under the laws of its state. That church owns property, and holds title and possession, subject to such conditions as are laid down by the laws of that state.

According to the laws in most states, the property of any church is regarded as a trust held in the interests of the doctrines and polity of the denomination to which that church belongs. The laws of the state protect the property from being taken into any other denomination. This is so even if the living members of the church should vote to join another denomination. Neither the church, as a church, nor its property, can be taken into another and different denomination, if the state laws forbid.

The United Church of Christ will be a new denomination. It is not a Congregational body. It will be different in polity and to some extent in doctrine. Study the laws of your own state before your church takes any action. Then get the opinion of legal counsel that knows these state laws.

Congregational Bookshelf

Professor E. S. Morgan declares that the central Puritan dilemma is "the problem of doing right in a world that does wrong." Two recent studies show how two famous Congregationalists of the 17th Century, Oliver Cromwell and Gov. John Winthrop, overcame the difficulty.

The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell by Maurice Ashley, (MacMillan, $5.00) reveals the fighting splendor of British Independency. The Lord Protector helped destroy the myth of a divine monarchy by sending Charles I to the scaffold. His political vision produced the government by Parliament which England now enjoys.

From the outset Cromwell was an Independent by conviction. His first parliamentary acts were to abolish the coercive power of the Anglican bishops. His military prowess protected England from the Scottish import, Presbyterianism. To Congregationalists like his chaplain and fellow freedom fighter, Hugh Peter, the Lord Protector gave unqualified support.

A new biography of Gov. Winthrop of the Bay Colony, *The Puritan Dilemma* by E. S. Morgan (Little, Brown, $3.50), demonstrates the wise moderation of New England Congregationalism. For twelve terms Winthrop was elected to the highest office in the colony. Dr. Morgan has recovered the true stature of the early governor, dedicated lay leader of the First Church in Boston, and shrewd diplomat in the troubled years of settlement.

— REV. ROYAL G. DAVIS, Houlton, Me.

Many Congregationalists will be interested in the Tercentenary Edition of the *Savoy Declaration,* the simplest, most readable statement of Congregational polity ever issued. This edition will be available on May 15 from The Brownist Press, 1324 Oak Park Av., Berwyn, Ill. (An article on the Savoy Declaration by Dr. Henry David Gray of Hartford, Conn., will appear in the September CONGREGATIONALIST.)

WOMEN'S WORK

TOGETHER

For many of the women's organizations in the churches, June is not only the month of final reports but a month of beginning with new officers and leaders, a month when plans are initiated and a new program inaugurated for the year ahead.

Many of you have written the Commission on Women's Work requesting program packets and plans to aid you in drafting the blue print for your own program. We have appreciated very much the suggestions and ideas you have shared with us and, in so doing, aided in the understanding of our common problems.

Since we are a new organization we are not resourced with materials. The time-honored traditions and practices which are our Congregational heritage should strengthen your discrimination and examination of all materials which you choose to use. To meet our immediate needs will require the careful scrutiny and the creative imagination of all of us. Loyal Congregationalists today face as great a challenge as Sputnik has been to our educational system. Together, we can meet it — *together.*

The Commission At Work

The Commission on Women's Work is in the process of assembling material in the nature of suggestions only for program planning, devotional aids, suggestions for service projects, and a common missions project in which we may all share together. We need to know to whom such material may be sent.

A 1958-59 roster of Women's Organizations of the National Association churches is being compiled. Will you please send us the following information: name and address of your church; name of minister; name of the women's organization or organizations; number of members and when meetings are held; name and address of the president or leader; and where you wish communications from the Commission sent. Please do this promptly.

Let Us Hear from You

We plan that you hear from the Commission on Women's Work regularly and we assure you that we want to hear from you, the women of the churches, on your suggestions and your problems. You see, the churches which have voted to become members of the National Association have given testimony that they believe in the time-honored practices of Congregational churches, in local autonomy, in the members of a church determining the affairs of that church, etc. We believe that the member churches of the National Association would like to bear witness to those beliefs by participating in the plans to be formulated and the policies to be adopted.

Only as the member churches speak out and help make the decisions and share in our common concerns will the National Association REMAIN the Congregational body it was organized to be. We urge you to begin now to make plans and to see to it that at least one of your women attend the Annual Meeting to be held at Detroit, October 20-23, and to participate in the discussion at the seminar on Women's Work. TOGETHER, we can make it an inspiration for all and a power for good and for God in the year ahead.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION COMMISSIONS

Dr. George V. Bohman of Royal Oak, Michigan, Moderator, has announced the following commissions for the year 1958.

Women's Work: Mrs. Paul A. Quaintance, convenor, 408 So. Highland Ave., Los Angeles 36, Cal., Mrs. George Mead, Hartford, Conn., Mrs. Alan Jenkins, Royal Oak, Mich., Mrs. Raymond A. Waser, Pomona, Cal., Mrs. Cecil Ruoff, Pittsburgh, Penn., Mrs. George Berkaw, Detroit, Mich., Mrs. Robert E. Collins, Grand Rapids, Mich., Mrs. Dale Kelly, Burlington, Iowa, Mrs. F. J. Lenfestey, DePere, Wis. (Green Bay Church), Mrs. E. W. Adams, Marshalltown, Iowa.

Religious Education: Dr. Robert M. Frehse, convenor, 506 W. Maplehurst, Ferndale, Mich., Rev. Robert H. Scanland, Los Angeles, Cal., Rev. Max Burke, Pomona, Cal., Rev. Walter G. Couch, Jr., Florence, Mass., Mrs. Henry D. Gray, Hartford, Conn., Rev. Leslie Barnette, Oklahoma City, Okla., Miss Katherine F. Lenroot, Hartsdale, N. Y., Mr. William Stouffer, Los Angeles, Cal.

The Ministry: Rev. Raymond A. Waser, convenor, 393 E. Alvaredo Ave., Pomona, Cal., Mr. James C. Ingebretsen, San Jacinto, Cal., Rev. Harry J. Stubbs, Gary, Ind., Prof. Marion J. Bradshaw, Bangor, Maine, Mr. George E. Gullen Jr., Detroit, Mich., Rev. Russell J. Clinchy, Forest Hills, N. Y.

Publications: Rev. Henry David Gray, chairman, South Congregational Church, Main and Buckingham Sts., Hartford 3, Conn., Rev. Harry R. Butman, Los Angeles, Calif., Rev. Hugo R. Pruter, Berwyn, Ill., Miss Evelyn Bumgarner, Lansing, Mich., Mr. Walter Strong, Beloit, Wis., Mr. M. W. Hughes, Clear Lake, Iowa.

The personnel of the Commission on Missions was listed in the March CONGREGATIONALIST.

NEWS NOTES

Henry Ward Beecher's Church To Remain Congregational

With only 11 dissenting votes at a well-attended meeting on February 24, 1958, Plymouth Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn, voted definitely that "it will not become a member of the United Church of Christ." The church reaffirmed its intention to cooperate with churches of all denominations, and declared that it does not yield any rights of membership in Congregational bodies nor any equities in the properties of bodies or agencies of the Congregational Christian Churches.

California Ministers' Retreat

Gerald Heard was the principal speaker at the retreat of pro-Congregational ministers and their wives at San Jacinto, Cal., during the week after Easter. Plans were made for calling a special meeting of the Los Angeles Association to hear news about the pending lawsuit, and for a luncheon meeting of "middle-of-the-road" ministers at the State Conference meeting for the same purpose.

New Member Church

The Congregational Church of Warren, Maine, has recently voted to become a member of the National Association, making twelve from the Pine Tree State thus far, with other churches giving it serious consideration.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

(Condensed from a paper by Rev. Arthur W. Tiffen, Tarentum, Penna.)

I came to this country from Canada because I had compared the polity and theology of the Congregational fellowship and the United Church of Canada. The nature of my choice shows my devotion to the absolute and unlimited freedom found only in our Congregational form of church government.

Our consideration of the United Church of Canada should begin with the individual church member. To the average layman little difference is seen between our Congregational fellowship and the United Church. The forms of worship are quite similar. In the United Church great stress is laid on infant baptism, emphasizing its sacramental nature.

Soon after the child begins High School, he is encouraged to unite with a congregation as a voting member, and baptism is a definite prerequisite for church membership. As a member he now takes a new interest in the organization of his local congregation, whose organization is set up not by the local church, but by the denomination as a whole.

What the Minister Sees

The United Church minister, however, sees things in a different light from that of the layman, as local church membership is prohibited to active ministers, whose membership must be in Presbytery. The young ministers feel the effect of national organizational machinery as soon as they are ordained, for all ordinands must be subject to the Transfer Committee of the General Council for two years. (The scientific analysis of Church Union in Canada by Silcox claims that this provision is *ultra vires* of the Basis of Union.)

The pastoral relationship is a three-way written contract involving the minister, the congregation, and Presbytery. All three must approve before the relationship can be set up or dissolved. In fact, the first step that any minister must take in resigning a pastorate must be to send a written resignation to his Presbytery giving the reasons for such action. Sometimes this can cause embarrassment for the minister, for the local church, or for both. We can see quite easily that a minister who dares to disobey Presbytery soon finds his professional opportunities severely curtailed. Let me point out that this applies also to churches which were Congregational before Union, but which have now surrendered their independence so far as the pastoral relationship is concerned.

The relationship of a minister to the United Church of Canada, compared to Congregationalism, may be illustrated clearly by questions asked of a minister entering the United Church from another denomination. These are taken from the *Book of Common Order* of the United Church:

> "My brother, do you accept the doctrine and polity of the United Church of Canada, and do you promise to *submit yourself to lawful authority* within the same? Will you dutifully submit yourself in the Lord to the authority of this Presbytery?"

The Chief Unit

Presbytery is a representative body, usually meeting monthly and holding oversight over pastoral charges. Under the provisions of the *Manual*, each pastoral charge, upon the calling of the roll of Presbytery's annual meeting, must through its lay representative answer certain definite questions regarding the conduct of the congregation's affairs. Sisco says, "In cases where the answers to these questions are not satisfactory, or in the event of continued refusal to answer the questions, the Presbytery *shall* make immediate provision for the exercise of its oversight." This oversight can even be carried to the extent of padlocking a church building and refusing to allow worship there until the straying from conformity has been corrected. Through its holding of ministerial membership, Presbytery has the power to bring any non-conforming church back into line.

While ministerial membership must rest in the Presbytery, the Conference has the responsibility for ordination. The Conference meets regularly annually, and special meetings may be called in case of necessity; but compared to Presbytery the Conference has little power. An appeal from a Presbytery decision may go to Conference, but with negligible hope of success. After all, Presbytery holds the purse strings to keep the Conference going. A minister applies for a church through a Presbytery to a Conference, but here the Conference is only a "rubber stamp" to approve decisions already made by the Presbytery concerned.

At the top of the pyramid is the General Council, which governs national policies. The General Council's Moderator has great influence but little power. For example, the Moderator tried to prevent the London Conference this year from ordaining a married woman, without success. The General Council meets every two years.

There is no doubt about the fact that, particularly in the sparsely settled regions of the Prairie Provinces and northern Ontario, the 1925 union resulted in elimination of duplication and a strengthening of the Church as a whole. This material consolidation through compromise of basic principles, however, watered down the distinctive contributions which its constituent members brought into the union. This is particularly true of Congregationalism, the weakest partner of the three, whose distinctive witness of freedom has virtually disappeared.

Too High a Price?

Has Canadian organic union been purchased at too high a price? The brief prepared in 1924 by the Canadian Baptist Convention says, among other things, "For Christians who differ on questions which some of them hold to be of vital importance, it is surely better to admit the impracticability of corporate union than to seek to compass such a union at a cost of sacrificing cherished convictions."

Silcox's scientific study of the situation prevailing eight years after union, continuing to a great extent even today, has much to contribute to our study of the strength and weakness of the United Church. First of all, as we see today in many areas of our own fellowship, in this time of controversy, *cooperation between churches is derided by unionists* as falling short of the "ideal" of organic union. Few outstanding opportunities for Canadian cooperation in home mission work were brought to the attention of those in charge of research. The bitter controversy with the non-concurring Presbyterians made any immediately effective cooperation with that body all but impossible. The United Church became so large in comparison with other Protestant churches that it overshadowed all the rest put together. The churches that have stayed out of the union were placed to some extent on the defensive, much as National Association churches are placed in our own fellowship. This is not conducive to true cooperation.

(Continued on page 7)

ACCENT ON YOUTH

East, West and Midwest: programs for young people of the Congregational churches are being planned for this summer. On June 20-21 a Northeast Regional Youth Rally will be held at South Congregational Church, Hartford, Connecticut. A Chinese student at Piedmont College has been invited to share with our young people some of his experiences and tell of the work being done by Chinese Christians among refugees from the Communists.

A retreat of California Congregational ministers and their wives after Easter planned a summer program for young people in that area.

From August 18 through 24th an "Adventure in Christian Fellowship" conference will be held at Long-Win Camp, Long and Baldwin Lakes, near Union, Michigan. Further information about this camp may be obtained from Registrar, Central Association, 1241 South Oak Park Av., Berwyn, Illinois.

Have You Tried a Youth Exchange?

Dog-tired, but still singing, forty teen agers climbed down from the bus after a ten hour trip from Los Angeles to Carmel, California. They were completing the first half of the second annual Holy Week youth exchange program.

The idea of a youth visitation originated when Charles Downes, Director of Religious Education of the Carmel Church of the Wayfarer, wrote a letter to Mrs. Fred Luenberger, Director of Religious Education of First Congregational Church, Los Angeles, suggesting a get-together for the youth of the two churches, both of which use the materials of the Character Research Project as a part of their program of Christian Education.

During the exchange, the young people live in each other's homes. Parents assist with preparation of the meals served in homes or in the respective churches. Transportation to the various events in the two communities is also arranged by combined parent and youth committees.

Highlights of the Los Angeles visits have included tours through the new University of California at Los Angeles Medical Center, C.B.S. West Coast TV studios, Disneyland, and the famous Crucifixion painting at Forest Lawn Memorial Park. The Carmel group arranged tours of the Carmel Valley, Big Sur State Park, the famous 17-Mile Drive, Fisherman's Wharf at Monterey and the Navy Post Graduate School for officer training. Charles Downes is a former student

Youth Visitation Group in California

at the Navy School and is still an active reservist.

A Disneyland bus driver, who confided that he was not much for religion except in World War II combat experiences, remarked that we were working with the only really important group, the youth. A passenger on the bus coming to Los Angeles commented that it must be a church group since they were not smoking nor acting rowdy. When asked how we could improve our Church Youth program, one girl said, "Have more things like this youth exchange." This youngster had been in a car which stalled in the flash flood which greeted the group on arrival in Carmel this year and caused four young people to wade out of a four-foot deep rushing torrent.

One special event of the week, both years, has been the Good Friday Communion Service in the churches at Carmel and Los Angeles. Parents of both groups of young people were glad to have church-sponsored activity to replace the disorganized youth gatherings which have become a problem in California resort communities during Holy Week.

— Rev. Robert H. Scanland, Los Angeles, Cal.

United Church of Canada

(*Continued from page 6*)

Union has diminished interest in ministerial associations and intensified the interest in meetings for United Church pastors only. One pastor boasted to me that he had no use for any movement toward ecumenicity which stops short of full organic union, on United Church terms of course because the United Church already enrolls nearly half of Canadian Protestants. Its only serious rivals are the Presbyterian Church in Canada (which has tripled its membership since union), and the Anglican Church of Canada. All Methodist churches disappeared at the time of union, and only a few Congregational churches were able to stay out. To a United Churchman, nothing less than organic union can hold any interest. He has tasted the power which organic union brings and he wants more of it. He is therefore impatient with Congregationalism, despite all its magnificent works.

NEWS NOTES

Pastoral Changes

Rev. Ellsworth Lyon of Monticello, Ill., has accepted a call to the Wataga Congregational Church and the Ontario Congregational Church of Oneida, Ill.

Rev. Lorenzo G. Todd, Associate Pastor of the Lathrup Village Community Congregational Church, Birmingham, Michigan, has accepted a call to Bayport, Minn.

Rev. Edward A. Smith of the Unitarian Church in Ellsworth, Maine, will begin work in July at the First Church in Houlton, Congregational and Unitarian.

Rev. Curtis C. Busby of Warren, Maine, has accepted a call to the church in Essex, Massachusetts, of which the famous Rev. John Wise was pastor in 1705, when he wrote "The Church's Quarrel Espoused," the book which did so much to preserve the freedom of Congregationalism in colonial days.

New Building at Cheyenne

The First Congregational Church of Cheyenne, Wyo., Rev. Leslie G. Deinstadt, pastor, dedicated its new building on February 16. Dr. Howard Conn of Plymouth Church, Minneapolis, was guest preacher at the evening service.

Volume 1 THE CONGREGATIONALIST Number 4

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galatians 5:1

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OUR COVER PICTURE: The interior of the church at Leyden, Holland, where the Pilgrims worshipped during their sojourn there.

Maine Congregationalists Organize

Pursuant to a Letter Missive from the First Church in Houlton, a council was held on April 10 in the High Street Union Congregational Church of Newport, Maine, to organize a Maine Congregational Christian Council. Rev. Lewis A. Chase of Wells was elected Moderator, and Mrs. William S. Cole of Newport, Scribe. After an opening devotional service led by Rev. Royal G. Davis of Houlton, Rev. Thomas J. W. Cornish of Cornish led a discussion on "Continuing Congregationalism." Mr. Davis then spoke on the situation in Maine. After luncheon Rev. Joseph J. Russell, Eastern Field Representative of the National Association, told of the organization and work of that body. His talk was followed by many questions.

Following a thoughtful discussion, it was voted to proceed with the organization of a permanent Congregational Council of Maine. William S. Cole, Esq., of Newport, Rev. Arthur R. McDougall Jr. of Bingham, and Professor Marion J. Bradshaw of Bangor were appointed a committee to draw up By-Laws for the new organization. It was then voted to adjourn until May 22d, when another meeting will be held in the same place, to act on the report of the committee and perfect the organization.

The deep interest of many Maine Congregationalists was shown by the attendance from all sections of the state. The May 22d meeting will be reported in a future number of THE CONGREGATIONALIST.

Illinois Congregationalists Meet at Lacon

Sixty-eight Illinois Congregationalists met in the church at Lacon on April 16, to organize for the cause of Congregational freedom. After a devotional service led by Robert M. Bowman of Avon, Dr. Howell D. Davies spoke on "The Present Situation" and led a discussion on "The Effect of the Merger Upon the Churches."

After luncheon the women met to organize a "Women's Fellowship of Continuing Congregational Churches of Illinois," choosing Mrs. Sidney V. Holt of Oneida as President and Mrs. W. Harvey Young of Galesburg as Secretary. Professor George V. Bohman of Detroit, Moderator of the National Association, addressed the entire gathering on "Plans for the Future," and Rev. Bruce H. Masselink of Burlington, Iowa, spoke on "The Iowa Experience," followed by discussion on "What Is Our Next Step?" Rev. George E. Millard of Chicago gave the closing prayer.

In Connecticut, Too

South Congregational Church, Hartford, was host to over 100 Connecticut Congregationalists who met on April 17 to complete the organization of the Connecticut Congregational Fellowship, which had been started last September. After talks and discussions about the National Association and its program, and the present status of the lawsuit, Dr. Henry David Gray, host pastor, spoke on the situation among the Connecticut churches and their relation to the State Conference and particularly the matter of their cooperation with their present Associations.

After dinner William E. C. Bulkeley, Esq., of Hartford presented the proposed constitution and by-laws. These had been drawn up by a committee composed of Hugh E. Campbell, M.D. of Norwich, General Sanford H. Wadhams of Torrington, Dr. Gray and Mr. Bulkeley. These were adopted provisionally, to be in effect until the next annual meeting in May of 1959.

Officers were elected, Dr. Henry David Gray, Moderator, Mr. Robert B. Whiting of Colebrook, Associate Moderator, Mrs. Stewart Tatem of Eastford, Secretary, and Mr. Hazen R. Ober of Torrington, Treasurer. The Executive Committee consists of Mr. Gordon Moody of Centerbrook, Mr. H. R. Kelsey of Stony Creek, Mr. C. G. Wadhams of Torrington, Mr. Alfred E. Garrigus of East Haddam, Mr. L. A. French of Watertown, and Mr. George Howard of Colebrook.

Informal plans were announced and approved for youth rallies, men's and women's meetings, and other things "to make our continuing Congregational churches bright and shining lights."

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